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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/663,812	09/17/2003	Takehito Washizawa	116780	4043
25944	7590	02/04/2005	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			DUDEK, JAMES A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2871	

DATE MAILED: 02/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/663,812	WASHIZAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James A. Dudek	2871	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 3 and 5-7 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,4 and 8 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claim 1, 4 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over 503.

In re claim 1 and 8, 503 teaches a liquid crystal device, comprising: a liquid crystal layer; a pair of substrates sandwiching and holding the liquid crystal layer [1a and 1b]; and spacers disposed between the pair of substrates [4]; at least one of the pair of substrates having depressions formed thereon [see figure 1(b) and second full paragraph column 8], and the spacers being mainly disposed in the depressions [see figures].

In re claim 1, 503 teaches the liquid crystal device according to Claim 1, but lacks the depressions being formed in the non-pixel regions. However, it was well known to position the spacers at non-display region to prevent noise. Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to combine the well known spacer position with 503

In re claim 4, 503 teaches the liquid crystal device according to Claim 1, but lacks a plurality of scanning electrodes being formed on one of the pair of substrates; a plurality of data electrodes being formed on the other substrate so as to intersect with the scanning electrodes; and

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the depressions being formed between the adjacent scanning electrodes and between the adjacent data electrodes. However, it was well known to use TFT switching devices to improve resolution and contrast. Accordingly it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of invention to combine the well known TFT with 503.

Regarding the spacers being placed between the electrodes and pixels, it was well known not to place spacer on the pixels. In this case, 503 applies pressure and placing the spacers on a data line would increase the chances of cracking the line. Accordingly it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to combine the well known placement of spacers with 503.

Regarding the depressions corresponding to the shielding layer. It was well known to form the shielding layers in the non pixel regions to improve contrast. Accordingly the depressions and shielding layers will correspond to each other. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of invention to place the shielding layers in the nondisplay regions.

Regarding claim the color filters, it was well known to use color filters in the display regions to provide the display with the capability of forming color images. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of invention.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3 and 5-7 are allowed.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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Applicant's arguments filed 11/16/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant sole argument is they disagree with the well known assertion. Each of following patents teaches placing the spacer in non display regions:

US 6788380 B2

US 6774975 B2

US 6724458 B2

US 6721024 B1

US 6535188 B1

US 6433852 B1

US 6424402 B1

US 6373547 B1

US 6339462 B1

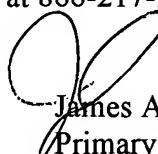
US 6281960 B1

US 6154267 A

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Dudek whose telephone number is 571-272-2290. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert H. Kim can be reached on 571-272-2293. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



James A. Dudek
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2871